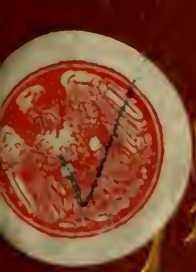

Thistle Down

Esmeralda Boyle

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THISTLE-DOWN.

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BY

ESMERALDA BOYLE.

PHILADELPHIA:
J. B. LIPPINCOTT & CO.
1871.

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TO A PICTURE.

By thine eye, so softly brown,
Never darkened with a frown,
And above that tender eye
Forehead broad, and nobly high,—
I love thee!

By that mouth of sweetest mould,
That to me but sweetness told,
In the words so calm, so dear,
That full often blest mine ear,—
I love thee!

By that hand in days of yore
That I held, shall hold no more;
By that heart where ever blend
Generous truths; my brother, friend,
I love thee!

JUNE.

The portal of Summer stands open before us,
The halls are illumed by a glad sunny ray;
O'er the threshold comes June, with a smile like the morning,
And follows the steps of the beaming young May.

The zephyrs are lifting with light fairy fingers
The robe of bright green that is floating round June,
As her white feet are dancing through valley and meadow,
To the stream's merry music, the fountain's gay tune.

Oh, the roses, the roses are deeper than crimson:
They circle her brow, and her rich amber hair;
They open their hearts to the lips of the Summer,
And yield up their breath in the gold-winnowed air.

The bird-voices called her away from the dreaming
Of flowers and butterflies coming full soon;
They waked her with twitters of musical pleasure:
"O, open your eyes to us, beautiful June!"

Ah, could we detain her? How quickly she fleeteth!
We turn to the paths where she flitted along,
But we look all in vain, for the sylph has departed;
We hold in our memory,—a flower—a song:

Ah, June! there are roses thou ne'er canst regather,
All faded, and fallen, and wasted their breath—
Our friends are the roses adorning our gardens,
The chill that falls over their lives we call death.

Oh! redder than roses that blossom and wither,
The loves of the hearts that lie buried for aye
In the arms of the spring-time, the bosom of summer,
Enfolded by autumns now drifted away.

TO A BIRD.

Sweeter thou than all the poets
That have sung!
Mellow are the lyrics ringing
From thy tongue!
Wondrous warbler, robed in feathers
Jet and gold!
Precious gems the tiniest caskets
Surely hold.
Vainly may earth's boasted artists
Hope or sigh
E'er to deck their loveliest pictures
With such dye!
Who, of mortal masters, ever
Wrought such things?
Made a golden song, and gave it
Flashing wings?
Think we, as we hear thy singing,
All day long,
Only God, the Artist, painteth
Such a song!

I will weave a little romance
For thee, bird,
From the waifs of fairy legends
I have heard.
Once a Peri, doomed to penance
For a wrong,
Sought forgiveness of her monarch
In a song,—
Wrought a strain of wildest music,
Rare and sweet,
Laid it low amid the violets
At her feet.
There, beneath a net of dew-drops,
On the ground,
Sang the music, like a spirit
Jewel-bound.
Through the world the Peri wandered
From her lay,
Found a sad, lone bird, enchanted
By a Fay.
So she brought her song and sang it
To the bird,
And it raised its voice and warbled
What it heard.
Music of the bird and Peri
Echoes woke,
And the cruel Fay's enchanting
Bond was broke.

And the king forgave the Peri
Her great wrong,
And with gold he decked the singer
Of the song.
Thou the songster that I sing of,
Thine the lay,
Cheering all the dismal moments
Of the day,
Filling all the vacant places
In my heart:
Golden singer, stay beside me,
Ne'er depart!

ONE LITTLE KISS.

Flitting back and forth o'er the grass
The sunlight fell,
Like spears of gold, through aspen-leaves
Shading the dell.
The grass was green, the oriole sang
A heartful tune,
As Claude and Clare gave love for love
One day in June.
Unheard the song-gush in the tree!
The oriole sung:
How love was earned, a brood was reared,
A nest was hung!
The zephyrs through the shaking leaves
Bent low to Clare,
And lifted up the waifs and curls
Of flaxen hair.
The woodbine swept the verdant sward
Whereon they sat,
And stirred with fickle, fragrant touch
Each rustic hat,

The while Claude's heart spoke from its deeps
That summer day,
And vows were uttered gentler far
Than oriole's lay!
The hours went by, and left them in
The mossy fold,
The gold upon the summer's green,
Life's green and gold!
But when the sun was slanting down
Unto the west,
Then Claude arose and walked by her
He loved the best.
They trod now in the winding path,
Next through the grass,
Beside the meadow-stream that shone
As shining glass.
At last he stood; she silent sat
Upon the stile,
And round her lips, in lovely gleams,
There crept a smile.
Her gaze was resting on the flowers,
Full fair and sweet,
That raised their winsome faces up
Against her feet.
Claude fondly took within his own
Her slender hand,
And on her tiny finger slipped
A golden band.

Then murmured Claude, "What may I claim
Of Clare for this?"
She raised her smiling mouth, and said,
"One little kiss!"
Another kiss? The world was robed
In rosy pink,
As down behind the hills the sun
Began to sink.
Another kiss! And then the stars
Came out to look,
And gave a wink for every kiss
The lover took.

Both now are dead! Two graves are there
Beside the brook.
The grass is long. The shadows lie
Across the nook.
The stars that told this tale to me
Do ne'er forget;
They count and count, in golden winks,
Those kisses, yet.
The oriole often windeth through
His happy song
The love of Clare, the love of Claude,
Untouched of wrong.

TO MY MOTHER.

I AM in a dreamy mood:
Out before me lies the wood,
  Upright trees and fair,
And through all the openings pass,
Over flowers, through the grass,
  Little breaths of air.
Up among the boughs and twigs,
Rustling leaves and tender sprigs,
  Birds are singing high.
Through the space, half in a trance,
Outward now and then I glance
  To the summer sky;
And the clouds that come and go,
Are like whitest banks of snow
  Formed by sidelong drifts.
Now I see a band of blue
Or a gold bar sliding through
  All the narrow rifts.
Every hill is spread with green,
And the valleys down between
  Are full, cool, and deep.

There the waters slip along,
With a rustic tale or song,
  Where the shadows sleep.
Past the bending willow-trees,
Fraught with olden melodies,
  Rappahannock flows;
Down among the rocks and stones,
Making little sighs and moans,
  On and on it goes.
Downward bend the blades of grass,
Kissing ripples as they pass
  Onward to the sea,
As this rhyming message goes,
As this simple ballad flows,
  From my heart to thee.

"ONE FAITH, ONE KING, ONE LAW."

Brimful of blessings as the sun that shines
Between the tears of April through the blue,
My spirit softly whispers from these lines,
God give you grace, and keep you always true!
True to the faith that points forever up
And leads us in the straight and narrow way,
And turns our lips from Pleasure's glittering cup:
To-morrow is the Crown, the Cross to-day,

Ah! choose you, in the rosy days of youth,
A law to guide you fair through everything,
And make your heart a palace for the Truth,
And there let Truth forever reign a King!
The King! the King of all most right and great,
And all most beautiful and pure and good!
And round the monarch in his royal state
Will ring sweet Peace and all her sisterhood.

A SAND-BAR.

A NARROW bar of sand outstretchéd lay;
From life, from death, 'twas lying far away,—
As youth from age, as night is from the day,
December's snow from rosy wreaths of May.

As flies a bird in spring to some lone tree
Within a leaf-bound nook, where birdlings be,
A fairy shallop darted o'er the sea,
Like to a petrel, white and swift and free!

The sea was rough, the sky with dullness spread,
And every star behind a cloud had fled:
All cold and pale, as if her soul were dead,
A maiden sat near to the shallop's head.

Her hands were filled with flowers of the West,
As she had gone through all the woods in quest
Of wild, sweet things that find their life and rest
Upon fair mother Nature's gracious breast.

The flowers she held we call "forget-me-not,"
And "fairy flax,"—a gem—a tiny dot
That grew upon some mossy, sun-fleck'd spot,
Or by the pathway to a woodland cot.

And as the blossoms, dampened yet with dew,
That, like an Easter sky, were fairest blue,
Her eyes, as fair as they, were azure too!
But, looking up, they lost their wild-flower hue,

And azure tints in hazel shadows float,
As two stray flowers in a castle moat.
A youth, with folded arms, who stood remote
Within the narrow ending of the boat,

Bent down his look upon her upturned face;
It filled her heart and all the outward space
Of life between her life and his life's place,
As floods a tearful soul God-given grace.

The waves grew calm; no ocean murmur spake,
The heart- and soul-entrancing bonds to break;
All peaceful as a hill-imprisoned lake,
Save chasing foam that followed in the wake.

Upon those sands, where naught of earth does dwell,
Where magic songs of sirens ever swell,
Amid the curled sea-weed and pearly shell,
The footsteps of the youth and maiden fell.

"We'll meet again!" he clasped her hand, and spoke;
His voice deep through the untouched silence broke,
As through a wave an oarsman's steady stroke,
And all her heart in sudden wonder woke.

Now statue-like upon the foam-wreathed sands
The maiden through the spring and summer stands;
The gathered blooms that erst were in her hands
Float from her o'er the deep to other lands.

The boat has sped as speeds an arrow fleet!
As speeds fair Hope, whose breath and song are sweet;
Across the shell-strewn bar the billows meet,
And with deceitful kisses kiss her feet.

And morning, noon, and evening sees her there,
Her gaze upon the sea, her face still fair;
The breaths of roses red, with spices rare,
Caressing her sad lips and floating hair.

And, swift as wavelets o'er the glassy main,
Across her face float hope, and doubt, and pain,
Up from her heart, that whispers: "All in vain!
The shallop's gone, and will not come again."

FALLING LEAVES.

One by one the leaves are falling
On the chilly ground:
All the hopes I've been recalling
Perish at the sound.

Once those leaves were green and tender,
Trembling in delight
At the gentle touch of Summer:
Now behold their plight!

Thus it is with all the hopings
That a heart can wear:
Every fondly-cherished longing
Underlies a care.

Though the sun be brightly glancing,
Young leaves will decay;
And the gladness of a youth-time
Passes thus away.

A FAREWELL.

ADIEU to thee, beloved!
  Forever there will dwell
A sob of wildest anguish
  Within the word FAREWELL!

I hear the echo ringing,
  Like deep-toned convent bell,
That tells a soul's departure
  And bids the world farewell.

Through silent midnight watches,
  They come o'er hill and dell,
The words thy dear lips uttered:
  "Beloved one, farewell!"

Thou didst not think, in going,
  To sound the solemn knell
That will not cease its tolling—
  "Beloved one, farewell!"

Ah! piercing through my spirit
Upon my heart they fell,
And branded there forever,
"Beloved one, farewell!"

TO SR. M. DE CHANTAL.

CONVENT OF VISITATION B. V. M.

After Gerald Griffin.

A PRAYER for the rest of my spirit
Is all that I crave!
Refuse not, O thou who canst give it,
When I'm in the grave.

But ask, as a beggar imploring
For bread or for pence,
The Lord of thine heart and adoring,
When I shall go hence.

To God thou art nearer and higher
Than I can e'er be!
Refuse not mine earnest desire:
Pray often for me!

FOR A FRIEND.

'Twas in a day of Spring,—not in the Summer,—
And in the flush of evening too, I think,
The blinds were bowed, I saw the garden past them,
And in the sky a tender blush of pink.

But I forgot the garden and its roses,
And I forgot the sky's more rosy hue,
When, bending down, you caught my hand and murmured,
"The parting time has come to me and you."

But when you went, no tear rolled down unbidden,
Not in my heart a tear-drop found its way;
For ah, I thought, The Spring has its returning,
And with the birds my friend will come, and stay.

A little while has made you sad, and older,
And changed the look of hope you used to wear,
For one of earnest gazing towards the future,
As if some thing you loved were hidden there.

A sorrow that the world may not discover
Has wrought this change that's pictured in your face;
From out your crown a precious gem has fallen,
A jewel that the world might not replace!

But if the prayers I pray for you are answered,
Then all the hopes you hoped on earth in vain,
Yes, every jewel that your heart most treasured,
In heaven shall be restored to you again.

SONGS OF BIRDS AND FLOWERS.

The sun was tingeing every leaf with gold,
That else were green,
And casting on the murmuring brook
Its golden sheen.

And from the fold of clustering green
Out rang a lay,
The voice of song from little birds,
The songs of May.

And down below the songs of birds,
But sweet as they,
A whisper ran and floated on
The breeze away.

White as the wings of angels glittering in the sky,
Bright as the stars of summer looking from on high,
Flowers that deck the woodland and in the lowlands lie.

Green are the hills and meadows basking in the sun;
Fair are the clouds of evening when the noon is done;
And shining are the pebbles where the waters run!

Tripping o'er the mountains the zephyrs come and go,
Where'er the laurel climbeth and the roses blow,
Musically the fountains ripple as they flow.

Darting, darting, darting fleet,
Trilling, trilling, trilling sweet,
The wings and songs of birds.

Flitting, flitting, flitting past,
Little shadows thick and fast,
The passing wings of birds.

Cooing, cooing, cooing soft,
In the leaves that ~~green~~ wave, aloft,
The tender loves of birds!

Ever, ever, evermore
Golden music, woodland lore,
We learn from little birds.

THE DYING YEAR.

Only a little while,
  Heart-beats but few!
Goeth the ancient one,
  Cometh the new!

Wrongs that are done and past,
  Why need we scan?
Let what is bad or wrong
  Die with the man!

All that is right and true
  Snatch from the dust!
If we would judges be,
  We must be just!

Could he live o'er again
  Days that are fled,
Nothing would mar the fame
  Of the poor dead!

Who can look back, across
All the wide year,
Feeling no penitence,
Dropping no tear?

Hearts that are human hold
Something of good;
Hearts would far better seem
If understood.

Let the year slumber, then,
Mar not his fame:
Brighten his better deeds,
Cover his shame!

WRITTEN AFTER READING A SAD STORY.

Thy course was as a starry ray
  Through clouds of darkest hue;
And where the darkness darkest is,
  The light still shineth through.

Thy life was as the simple words
  Of some sweet poet's song,
Set to a tune of revelry
  And sung 'mid shame and wrong!

Or like unto the tender lay
  Of a wild lonely bird,
Near to a mountain-torrent sung
  And through its tumult heard.

The cup that to thy lips was pressed,
  Though jeweled to the brink,
Held poison none save thou mightst see,
  And thou alone mightst drink!

Yet, ah! unquivering were the lips
Against the glittering bowl!
Slow ebbed the poison through thy heart,
And deep into thy soul!

SUGGESTED BY A PICTURED "SCENE ON THE RHINE."

As I stood before the picture, came my muse with voice divine,
Saying, "Come with me and wander on the borders of the Rhine!

"All thy cherished dreams and fancies into song-wreaths thou canst twine,
As with hand in hand we linger on the borders of the Rhine!

"And the ancient German legends shall for evermore be thine,
As with hand in hand we wander on the borders of the Rhine!

"We will listen to sweet music from the heart of some old shrine,
As with hand in hand we linger on the borders of the Rhine!

"We will watch the blush of evening in the western
sky decline,
As with hand in hand we wander on the borders of the
Rhine!

"With the good-night songs of peasants then thy voice
will rise, and mine,
As with hand in hand we linger on the borders of the
Rhine!

"Ah! the scattered gems above us will with doubled
lustre shine,
As with hand in hand we wander on the borders of the
Rhine!

"And between the Past and Future there will be no
harsher line
Than the castle-crownéd borders of the winding river
Rhine!"

MY ANGEL.

I SIT in a dream, and the hours move by,
While I gaze on the pink and golden sky,
And see in my dream, through the flashing gates,
A guardian angel, who silently waits
And beckons me there.

His wings and his robes are of silver sheen,
His forehead is bright, his lips are serene,
And his curls are ringed by a starry crown,
That showers a glittering glory down
Through the evening air.

And the strain I hear is a spirit-song,
And it flows like a golden stream along;
It comes through the space in the gate of stars,
Where the angel waits by the jeweled bars,
So far and so fair!

Yet I may not sing the songs that I hear,
The angel-music so strange and so clear;
But still it flows, as a glorious stream,
Through the flashing gates of my life-long dream,
Like an answered prayer!

TO A PANSY.

Thou dear little Pansy! raise up thy bright head,
The spring has returned, and the winter is dead.
The frost cannot harm thee, dear one, do not fear!
It is the gay beauty, fair Spring, that is here!
Her smile is so golden, her songs woo and please,
Lift thy head, my sweet flower, my gentle Heart's-ease!
The air shall not roughen thy soft velvet cheek,
Sweetheart of the wildwood, so peerlessly meek!
On hill nor in valley no flower is there
In delicate richness with thee can compare!
An emblem of love unforgetting thou art!
To our hearts a remembrance of Nature's great heart!

A NEW-YEAR RHYME.

FOR AN OLD-YEAR FRIEND.

Though the clouds should darkly threaten,
And a cloud be o'er my heart,
I will hope the stars are shining
O'er thy path, where'er thou art!

May thy heart's unspoken longing,
Like to some deep, thrilling chord,
Rise up through the golden gateway
To the hearing of our Lord!

May the winds blow not too roughly,
Wheresoever thou mayst be!
Be the waters blue and peaceful,
If thou art upon the sea.

May the waves, like horns of silver,
Cast their treasures at thy feet,
And with grand and solemn voices
Sing thee music rare and sweet,

And bear messages most tender
To thee from remembered lands,
And give answer to thy yearnings,
If thou art on foreign strands.

If the world prove cold, and barren
As a desert, unto thee,
Be the palm-like, restful shadow
The fair truth that lies in me!

LET HER NAME REST.

We stand aside, and hear with downcast eyes
The judges dooming her. Surely the skies
Have let their spirits down, to walk on earth
Amid the sullied clay of lesser worth!

A thrill of bliss! a sigh, the blessed while
We stand near shining souls, so free of guile!
We lift our gaze: behold! who say these things
Are only men—not gods with spotless wings!

Let her name rest, O men who lash it so!
Unless your names and hearts are white as snow.
Your feeble wisdom stays this side the grave,
And One alone has power to blast or save!

Ah, did you cry, Take heed! return! beware
The snake hid in the roses false and fair!
Mayhap your looks were bland, your words were sweet;
Mayhap a serpent coils close to your feet!

Need they who do the sin, or they who aid
When they might crush the sin, be most afraid
Of that great Judge who sits our deeds to scan,
Noting the right and wrong of little man?

Dwells there on earth a heart so dark of hue
That God might not make pure, and perfect too?
Perhaps her misled soul held treasures rare,
And gems you knew not of were glittering there.

Some deed in her sad life may win reward:
Good work from her poor hands for our dear Lord!
Remember, He who bade the tempest cease,
Said to the sinful woman, "Go in peace!"

THE EVENING STAR, WRECKED OCTOBER 2, 1866.

O'ER the blue caressing waters
  Went a vessel on its way:
Many tearful words were spoken
  On that sorrow-giving day.

Hearts were there full high with hoping
  For the greetings yet to be;
Eyes were looking brightly forward
  For the port beyond the sea.

Soon the darkness gathered o'er them,
  But, save Heaven, none the might
Had to help them in the struggle!
  God, who saw it, knows the right.

Through the blackness sank the vessel,
  And that great fraternity—
Brother, sister, mother tender—
  Floated to Eternity!

From a mimic life they glided—
Life of woe and revelry—
Unto scenes from mortal curtained,
Through a dread uncertainty!

Acted are their parts forever;
Hearts are still where music sung;
Deaf are ears that wildly listened
To brave plaudits loudly rung.

Ocean waves, most sweetly singing,
Rolling o'er their dreamless heads;
Shining sands, and pearls, and coral,
Twined in sea-weed, are their beds.

By life's sea some hearts are waiting,
Watching for a drifting spar,
That their hopes may only cling to
Till the setting of their star.

LILIAN'S LOVE.

The foam was dashing fierce against
The rock where Lilian stood,
The wind blew back her yellow hair
Bound by an azure snood.

Her feet were bare, and white as pearls,
Upon the lone, bleak strand,
And white the fluttering flag she held
Within her slender hand.

And swiftly o'er the ocean swept
A vessel grand and strong,
And from its decks arose the sound
Of happiness, in song:

"Home! home! home!
From a land far over the sea,
Though clouds be dark, on speeds our bark
To our home, 'the Land of the Free.'

"Home! home! home!
As birds from the tempest flee,
Across the main we come again
To our home, the 'Land of the free.'"

Then sang the maiden's heart a song,—
Of all sweet things the best!
Her face amid its yellow hair
Was as the glowing west,—

The white and pink, the sunlight gold
That shines as down it dips!
And to the sea this song went out
From Lilian's heart and lips:

"To me! to me! to me!
My love o'er the broad sea darts
His love to my love! his life to my life!
Sing joy, from a thousand hearts!

"To thee! to thee! to thee!
My love sends its welcome out;
Far over the sea, my soul to thy soul
Outspeedeth the sailors' shout!"

The flashing sun went down behind
  The peakéd hills of foam,
Into the sea beyond the hills
  Encircling Lilian's home.

Fair Peace spread out ~~its~~ her silver wings
  Of pure and perfect rest,
O'er Lilian's life, o'er Lilian's love,—
  And Lilian's heart was blest!

AGNES.

They who know her story best
Do believe that she is blest,
In the land
Where forever reigns the King,
Where the angel-voices sing
In one band!

Ah! so pure the crimson flood
Of the youthful martyr's blood,
For her God,
That we well might look to greet
Flowers bright, and rare, and sweet,
On the sod,

Writing tender stories there
Of a spirit, young and fair
As a dove,
That has fluttered past the skies,
Through the gates of Paradise,
To its love!

Yet a better pledge is ours
Than the fragrant one of flowers
Springing wild,
That within her blissful home
Dwells the martyred Maid of Rome,
Sainted child!

MAY BLOSSOMS.

The winter, with its sighings deep and long,
Has borne away the snow-drifts and the sleet,
And we have now the May so fresh and green,
And drifts of blossoms sweet.

And drifts of song come from the high, bright trees,
And float upon the gentle morning air,
And call us forth to wander through the groves,
And bid us linger there.

And drifts of sunlight flooding all our lives,
Each ray of gold like to a gleaming cord,
Or like a gem-paved way to lead our thoughts
Up to our blessed Lord!

ONE WHO PASSED AWAY.

Her eyes were of heaven-like azure,
  Her form fair and round,
Her voice like a brook of the woodland
  In murmuring sound.

Delightful the musical motion,
  That seemed as by chance,
As waves o'er the blue summer ocean
  Unconsciously dance.

Her pathway led through a bright garden
  With beauty outspread;
The child gathered half-opened flowers,
  Then onward she sped.

Her robes are as snow, or as starlight;
  Her harp strung with gold;
Her song is of God and His glory;
  Her story is told!

VESPERTINE.

Bosomed deep in cloudy fleece,
Isles of white and purple rest,
Isles of beauty! Isles of peace!
Calmly pictured in the west.

Glancing rays of amber pale,
Quivering across the sky,
Gently part a misty veil,
For a watchful starry eye.

Sweeping through the silent air,
Vesper, singing, silver-shod,
Bearing up a wreath of prayer,
Lays it at the feet of God.

THE TRUTH AND YOU.

Like tiny mountains heaped with snow, the pearly
clouds across the sky,
Yet, though the winds of winter blow, the flowers of
memory never die!
Above us is the perfect blue; and, though the winds of
winter blow,
Your heart is ever warm and true, though many only
see the snow,
The cold white snow!

Outside the window Winter moans and sighs across the
withered green;
But safe beyond its harshest tones the Spring holds
flowers yet unseen;
And though the Present has its gloom, and all your
Past be dark as night,
As blossoms springing round a tomb, the Future rises
sweet and bright,
Full sweet and bright!

I am your friend, and you are mine: though Fortune's
winds blow good or ill,
My friendship never will decline, though you be false
or faithful still!
Yet all unshaken is my trust in one so true to all that's
true!
Time may not change or ever rust the earnest faith I
have in you,
The truth and you!

IN MEMORIAM.

CHARLES McCORMICK, M.D.,

Georgetown, D. C.

GONE from the friendships he cherished,
So tender and dear!
Gone from the loves that so sweetly
Encircled him here!

Gone from a land full of sorrow,
Where sorrows increase!
Gone to a land of pure beauty
And exquisite peace!

True to the hearts that he lived for,
His faith, and his God!
Noble the man we laid under
The green summer sod!

Sad are the tears that we weep o'er
The friend we have lost;
Bright is the crown that he weareth,
Full worthy the cost.

SNOW-DRIFTS.

THE snow is on the mountain,
And the ice is on the rill,
And the forest-trees are leafless in the blast,
And the music of the fountain
And the songs of birds are still,
Lying far beneath the snow-drifts of the Past!

The snow of time is lying
In drifts around the door,
They were gathered by the storm-winds in their strife,
And a mournful voice is sighing
To my heart for evermore
From beneath the gathered snow-drifts of my life!

On earth there's no returning
When the rose has lost its red,
And the summer lost its music and its sheen;
Then take to God thy yearning
Through the chambers of the dead--
The mounds beneath the snow-drifts all are green.

APRIL RAIN-DROPS.

A LONE little gem, like a tear-drop,
  Stole over the pane,
In Spring, as we sat at the window,
  Not heeding the rain.

  Turn back for a space, and remember
    A time gone away:
  You said: "I have something to tell you—"
    Ah! what was it, pray?

Clear drop followed drop with its patter,
  And sang o'er again
The song it has sung through all ages—
  The soft April rain!

  And have you in truth, then, forgotten?
    Oh, turn, dear, and think:
  The time was July, in the morning—
    My bonnet was pink.

Sad April, thy heart must be burdened
By some secret pain!
Or why would thy face be all dampened
By tear-drops of rain?

You stood in the shade of the curtain—
I trembled and sighed;
My cheek and my brow to my tresses
With blushes were dyed.

Ah, April! did March, the rude scoffer,
Awaken this pain,
With heartless and cruel deriding
Start tear-drops of rain?

Held down by a spell as of iron,
Your captive I sat;
You trembled and sighed with my sighing,
And looked at your hat.

The May-month thy sister is coming;
Oh, still thy refrain!
And greet her with smiles and caresses,
Not tear-drops of rain.

'Tis strange that you cannot remember
The month and the day,
When you said you had something to tell, and—
Forgot what to say!

TOO LATE.

"Too late! too late!" it is,
Or else too soon!
The golden morning hurries on,
And leaves the noon.

Too late! too late we wake!
Too soon it flies,
The life we hold so close, and love,
And falsely prize!

Too late! too late for us,
The time is by!
A little longing for the Past,
A single sigh.

Too late! too late! alas!
Departing breath—
Ah, Heart, too late! too late for life!
Too soon for death!

STARWARD.

I FEEL to-night an angel close beside me,
I'm sitting in the shadow of his wings,
The deeps of my deep heart within me stirred
By whisperings!

He stands in heaven before the Throne of God,
Clad in the dazzling beauty of his grace!
I would that I might turn some day and see
His shining face,

And on my shoulder feel the lingering touch
Of his unsullied, fair, angelic hands!
Oh, I would rise and follow through the waste
Of earthly lands!

His voice, attuned in praises to our Lord,
Like sounds of vesper-bells upon the wind,
Would lead, and I would follow past the stars,
Far, far behind!

A NOTE OF REMEMBRANCE.

I REMEMBER one day of autumn,
An autumn not very far back,
You'd been for a time in the country,
And looked rather shadowy, Jack.

You said you'd been longing to see me,—
Or words that were something the same,—
And ask'd if I knew you were coming,
And if I was glad that you came.

'Twere useless recording the answers,
They suited the case at the time,
And now if I cared to recall them
Might aid me in rhyming this rhyme.

You called me a saint for my goodness,
An angel in form and in face;
Tis nonsense for you to deny it,
I've noted the time and the place!

You uttered words worthy of Milton,
Or Dante, or Shakespeare, or Moore—
A something that some one has written—
I've certainly heard it before!

'Twas this: "that you thought of me always,
And wished that I might understand,
No woman was ever so perfect
In all of this christianized land!"

And when my turn came for replying,
I gave you some compliments too;
You called me "a dear little humbug:"
I would not have said that to you!

But distance will lessen resentment,
And I have forgiven you, Jack,
And promise, dear, not to forget you,
In case you make haste to come back.

AU REVOIR.

This year is dying now. I may not know
The fairer, coming year, so sure and slow!
I may be lying far beneath the snow
Of the New Year.

A prayer from thy strong, earnest heart I crave!
Mayhap the flowers o'er the sod will wave,
Where I lie dreaming, deep within the grave
Of the New Year.

Ah! the gold light of sweet spring-tide may shine
And summer bloom above thy grave, as mine,
And leaves drop there in autumn's sad decline,
In the New Year!

This is as naught! ah, not for this I write—
The moon is full, and fair and cold to-night,
Sandaled in silence, the lone hours take flight
To the New Year.

If those harsh words of mine did hurt thy heart,
Or tear the rosy coronal apart,
That Hope had bound, forgive me! much thou art
In the old year!

What more, if we bewail what we confess?
Is sorrow little worth? Repentance less?
Which would be easier,—to curse, or bless,
The coming year?

My much-mistaken friend, I do regret
That in the sunny Southern wilds we met;
Then let us each forgive, and each forget
The sad old year!

SALVE REGINA.

Mother of a God most just and merciful!
We thy praises sing:
Handmaid to the King!
Salve Regina!

Mother of our Lord, most pure and beautiful!
Truth thy name adorns!
Truth thy scorner scorns!
Salve Regina!

Mother of The Man most meek, most wonderful!
Mary—Heaven's Queen!
Powerful! Serene!
Salve Regina!

Fair patron of God's Church and its Protectress!
Tender Heart and Wise!
Lady of the Skies!
Salve Regina!

JUSTICE.

"JUSTICE! Who is he, grandmamma?" Karl said.
I laid my withered hand upon his head,
And answered thus:
"'Tis one who rests not in the day nor night,
Marking in gold, upon a tablet white,
Good words for us,

"And for our righteous deeds gives thrice again,
As fruit of seed upon a cultured plain,
A fair reward;
As flowers that bloom beside some meadow rill
Its gentle banks with gracious fragrance fill
In sweet accord."

Then answered Karl: "I do not understand.
Does every man that dwells within the land
In virtue live?"
"Not so," I answered: "though the truth may grieve,
Some hands are open ever to receive,
Yet nothing give!

"Some look, yet see not, for their eyes are blind,
The rag-clad forms that shiver in the wind
Before their door—
And to their cry for help they give no heed,
Nor to the voice that whispers, Clothe and feed
God's cherished Poor!"

"Then, grandma," asked the boy, "does Justice write,
In letters of pure gold upon the white,
Their deeds and name?"
"Such records kept within a darkened space
Are written on an ebon tablet's face
In words of flame."

"Are they who ask for bread, and stretch the hand
For alms, the only poor within the land
Who have sore need?"
"Nay, others still, with craving hearts unheard,
Go silent, longing for a cheering word—
Ah, poor indeed!

"And those who climb the ways most hard and steep,
Who weep when others see not that they weep,
Toil on alone,—
And, pausing near the summit of the hill,
Sit down to perish, cold and pale and still,
On some rough stone."

"Nay, where bides Justice while they suffer so?
Writes he upon his tablet, white as snow,
The tale you've told?"
"He sits in Heaven, Karl, and only there
Is balanced every deed, or dark or fair,
In scales of gold."

PILGRIMS OF THE PAST.

A sweet little maid sat reading, from a volume in her hands,
An old story of a pilgrim who had strayed to other lands;

And the tale was told in language of another date and clime,
And the letters were all golden, and the pictures were sublime.

But the pilgrim's hair was whitened by the touch of many years,
And his face was deeply channeled by the bitter tide of tears.

Growing weary of the present, as his lifetime fleeted fast,
He turned back his ancient footsteps to the country of the Past:

Its bright silver gates stood open, leading to its palace-
halls,
Where lone mortals who are weary oft find rest within
its walls.

A clear fountain threw its waters sparkling through the
balmy air,
And around its base grew flowers that were redolent
and fair.

And he heard through strains of music tender words of
love and praise,
Which his heart with joy remembered as the songs of
other days.

A soft sound of rippling laughter from young lips, full,
round, and sweet,
And a distant sound of dancing in a narrow village
street.

Then a maiden flitted by him, with dark dreamy eyes
of blue,
Her white kirtle looped with roses, and her hair of
sunny hue.

Then the pilgrim, sighing, murmured, in a deep and trembling tone,
"Ah, behold! I come, beloved! Turn and look on me, mine own!"

Then throughout the Past ran murmurs like the voices of the sea:
"Ah, my own, my peaceful-hearted! hast thou, then, forgotten me?"

And it followed her lamenting through the mellow eventide,
And she heeded it, returning through the Past unto his side.

And through all the shade and sunshine of the olden golden land,
Still she walked beside the Pilgrim as he clasped her by the hand,

Under gray old granite arches, and by broken marble fanes,
Unto simple rustic churches, through the blossom-bordered lanes,

Till they stood before a statue, with a mighty look and name:
From the marble in bold letters read they there together, Fame!

Then the Pilgrim and the maiden sought a green and mossy way,
Where the birds were always singing, and it seemed forever May.

And they sat near by a brooklet that trilled forth its baby-rhyme,
As it rose to kiss the blossoms of the wild and fragrant thyme;

Where the morning sunbeams rested on the dew-drops of the lea,
And forget-me-nots were blooming at the foot of each old tree;

Where the stars wrote shining mottoes in the azure deeps above,
Thus: "Let mortals learn a lesson from the stars, of perfect love!"

Then the maiden ceased her reading, and the book
slid from her knees,
Down among the whispering grasses that were stirring
in the breeze.

As she pondered, "Stars are faithful—only mortals are
untrue!"
Came a step quite close beside her, "Ah, Leofstan, is
it you?

"I have read an olden legend of a man who went to
look
For a land all full of beauty, like the pictures in the
book.

"And the story says he found it, and a maid all purely
clad,
And the maiden loved the Pilgrim, and the Pilgrim's
heart was glad.

"And he held her hand full firmly, as you now are
holding mine,
In the land where birds are singing, and the rose and
laurel twine.

"Ah, then, let us go, Leofstan, to that land so true and fair!
You will love me there forever, I will love you always there!"

AN EVENING SKETCH.

Pearly clouds above me, rimmed with bands of gold!
In my heart a story that is yet untold.

At my feet the murmur of a thankless world;
In my mind stray fancies never yet unfurled.

And the distant hill-top purple-robèd seems;
In my lap a volume of a poet's dreams.

Windows flash and glimmer in the evening sun,
Like a thousand sabres ere the fight is won!

Shadows veil the temples scattered here and there,
Pointing straight to heaven with their steeples fair—

Pointing up to heaven, o'er the clay and dust,
Like to white-clad spirits that are pure and just.

Trees with forms dismantled, rugged, dark, and stern,
As some truths in sorrow we are forced to learn,—

As some lives whose friendships and whose loves are
gone,
Standing all deserted, while the world moves on!

Soon the night will cover with its mighty pall,
Peace, and joy, and sorrow,—living, dead, and all!

PAUL.

I.

PAUL.

One bright day I wove a romance, and the hero's name
was Paul;
Now the romance has gone from me, but this much I
can recall:
That dear Paul would linger near me—near the heroine,
I mean—
And his words were always gentle, and his look was
most serene,
And his eyes were like the midnight that comes to
Southern skies,
And they asked me tender questions, and awaited my
replies,
And to make them all the surer, he would take her
restless hand,
And would hold it, like some pebble he had found
upon the strand;

For his hand than hers was larger, and the sun had
turned it brown,
And he called her hand a rose-leaf, or a waif of eider-
down.
And the evening would go by them, and the twilight
fall around,
And the stars come out above them, as the daisies on
the ground.
And their palace was of marble, fair as cherry-blossoms'
blow,
And they dwelt beyond the winter, and beyond the
ice and snow.
And the lake of Felix glistened like a lily-bordered
glass,
And the gayest flowers nodded 'mid the shining blades
of grass.
And when the days were longer than the romance I
tell o'er,
Then she drifted through the twilight from the palace
on the shore.
In a graceful little shallop they would drift their dreamy
way,
And beneath the silvery starlight through the reeds and
rushes stray,
As the shallop of my memory, through the days that
round me fall,
Pushes back to my Ideal whom I've named, forever, Paul.

II.

FOR PAUL.

THE broad, sunny day has gone from us,
In quiet 'tis furled.
And flowers and leaves it has scattered
All over the world.
We wreathe and we weave in the twilight
The dreams of the day,
And clothe them in violet and silver,
Or purple and gray.
One star quivers silently o'er us—
O'er land and o'er sea.
My heart turns to God through the gloaming,
And He bends to me;
And words flutter forth through the darkness,
As forest-leaves fall:
In anguish, temptation, or danger,
Protect my friend Paul!
Protect him and save him, O Father!
And guide him to Thee;
Bestow many favors upon him,—
Though fewer to me.
Behold, in the path half untrodden,
A cold, silent grave!

Thou, One of the One All Eternal,
Hast power to save!
The safety I crave is the answer
From God to my call:
Through anguish, temptation, and danger,
Protect my friend Paul!

III.

TO PAUL.

The twilight and evening were blending,
And into the room
Stole shadows, like angels of darkness,
Or spirits of doom.
I felt that mysterious power
Man may not control,
That sweeps through the unbroken silence
And speaks to the soul,
Unveiling most beautiful pictures
Of Hope or Regret.
The one with the joy-beaming features
We may not forget:
Her lips have but tasted of pleasure
From Life's golden cup;
She stands in the bright yellow sunlight,
The sun is just up.

The other, Regret, pale with sadness
From memory cast,
Stands gazing, not forward, but backward,
Deep into the Past;
The eyes looking westward are weary,
Though not with tears wet.
The clouds that are gathered are sombre,
The sun is long set.
A voice, as a voice that the distance
Is holding in thrall,
Said, "Write!" and I wrote—take the missive
And read it, Friend Paul!
Some stars on the banner of heaven—
The banner of blue—
With faithful and unchanging lustre
Remind me of you,
Some stars for radiance around them
We scarcely may see;
Yet steadfast and true to their mission,
And they are like me.
I feel though the light be but feeble,
Or clouds darken all,
I never may rightfully question
The friendship of Paul.
We meet in our life men and women
Who greet us and smile,

Whose memory of us is rounded
By that little while;
And hearts that are faithless to all things
They know and believe;
Oft caught in the net of the faithless,
They fain would deceive,
A few that are true to one teaching
Within a whole creed,
As offshoots of some wayward seedling
Half flower, half weed.
A serpent creeps under the roses,
And coils at our feet;
We see not the snake for the blossoms
So fair and so sweet!
Yet take but one step all unheeding
The base, shining thing,
And through the sweet flowers that wooed us
The serpent will sting.
However I once may have trusted,
My trust I recall!
However I once may have doubted,
I doubted not Paul!

IV.

A LETTER FROM PAUL.

A land where the sunshine and flowers
Our senses entrance:
High mountains, broad rivers, and vineyards,
Gay, beautiful France!

I THANK you, dear Friend, for your letter,
A symbol of you—
Untarnished, unbroken remembrance,
Full earnest and true!
Alarm for my danger is needless,
Though precious no less
To one who asks God in His greatness
Your life-way to bless.
Your wishes and hopes may avail much
To one little worth
The notice of God, whose sweet mercy
Spreads over the earth.
Though knowing above mortal knowledge,
My merit is small,
He guideth me safe through the path, where
Temptations most fall.
'Twere short to the end of our journey,
But sin makes it long.

If we sing well the song of God's giving,
He'll shorten the song.
My life of few years grows a burden;
Each thought is a care—
Ah! I long to sit down by the river
So peaceful and fair!
Sweet messengers tender and gentle—
Ay, gentle as doves—
Are hovering round me forever
From far-away loves.
From soul unto soul they have murmured,
These life-loves of mine—
"From now unto death and beyond it
Our hearts are all thine!"
Outstretched heaves the vast salty ocean,
An emblem of years,
Where ships of fond hope sink dismantled
'Mid wild waves of tears.
An ocean as strong as their truth is,—
Truth deep as the sea,—
With depth and with might rolls unceasing
Betwixt them and me!
Shaped but by a will that's Eternal
The first as the last:
He holdeth it all in His keeping,
The Future, the Past!

V.

THE ANSWER.

Your letter came to me this morning—
It started my tears!
Its words led me back through the shadows
To happier years,
When for the bright sunshine around us,
We never could trace
The path we have heard of full often
That leads to the place
Where hearts break, or part with a struggle,
And finish the race
Alone, and with nothing to gaze on
Save Fate's stony face.
Although in the garden behind us
A fairy bird sings,
And flashes through unfading bowers
Its beautiful wings,—
Let us hope for the future! Regret less—
Or mourn not at all,—
For God has bestowed many blessings
On both of us, Paul!
He gains not so much of the victory
Who, suffering, mourns—

The heart and the head of our Saviour
Were wounded with thorns!
Then, when we would murmur o'er sorrow
That marks earthly loss,
We'll think of the Prince of High Heaven,
Who died on a cross.
The blue sky above us is stormless,
Our barks float at ease;
Although they float, parted forever,
On different seas!
My spirit wafts words to your hearing,—
My spirit to yours,—
In murmurs like ocean-shell music
Of far-away shores.
Their purport is this: God is heeding,
He heareth each call!
Let us take His wide mercy for answer
To me and to Paul!

LOVE'S LESSON.

Dedicated to Maggie Mitchell.

To the leaf-embowered Summer, with its cherished
birds and songs,
All this rustic-fashioned story of a rustic maid belongs.

When the days are full of sunlight, then the light so
like to gold,
Adds a deeper glow and sweetness to the story that is
told.

Gentle Lorle weaving flowers into garlands rare and
gay,
Was as tender as the roses, and as beautiful as they;

And whene'er she stooped to cull them, the caressing
summer air,
Like a silent gypsy lover, kissed her forehead and her
hair.

Ah, the flowers surely knew it, in that golden day of
June,
And the song-birds seemed to know it, for they added
to their tune

A rich, dulcet note of music, free of sorrow, free of
care,
As it mingled with the sunshine and the fragrance
floating there.

Then a lay trilled through the valley; it was careless,
high, and strong,
As it swept before the singer of the mellow, mighty
song!

An old song, whose words were gathered in a famous
German town:
As he wandered o'er the mountains he had heard them
flowing down

On the breeze that came behind him: there he learned
the words he sang,
That through all the moss-lined valley with their magic
power rang:

"As the soft remembered music of the vespers' silver
bell,
Rings a voice through town and hamlet, through the
woodland, through the dell;

"And its tone is true and tender, and it flows unceas-
ing on,
Through the present to the future, from the days for-
ever gone!

"Like swift messages of spirits that are thrilling and
sublime,
One great voice with many echoes stirs the hearts of
every clime!

"And the voice is Love eternal—and the echoes blend
and rhyme
As they murmur dreamy music through the ancient halls
of Time!"

Then arose the voice of Lorle, past the birds and past
the trees,
And an answer to the stranger floated softly on the
breeze:

"Hid within green, silent valleys, undiscovered streamlets run;
By their banks are growing flowers that the sun looks not upon.

"There are dells, and nooks, and grottoes, where man's voice is never heard!
In the sea-deeps there are treasures that are lying all unstirred!

"Ah, behold a simple maiden, yet untaught of love or art!
Wake, O stranger, wake the echo that is slumbering in her heart!"

A KISS FOR ELLIE.

A kiss for thee, Ellie! my heart-love, my own!
Sweet rose in life's garden, but only half blown!—
A kiss for thee, Ellie! my heart-love, my own!

A kiss for thee, Ellie! unmet and unseen!
Though rivers and prairies our paths lie between.
A kiss for thee, Ellie! unmet and unseen!

To thee in the West-land, from me in the South,
A kiss for thine eyes, and a kiss for thy mouth!
To thee in the West-land, from me in the South.

TO THE YOUNG MOON.

FOR MARY AND DAISY.

Young, beautiful, and shining, and serene!
Glide on, glide on, thou silver-robéd Queen,
And let thy lovely face by men be seen!

Fair as the magic of the days of old;
Or some sweet fairy legend half untold,
Thy argent beauties to our sight unrolled!

Move on, move on, O moon so bright to view,
Across the star-laid floor of azure hue—
Thou Queen so peerless, and so calm and true!

Look from thy palace, arching, grand, and high!
Before thy glance the darkest shadows fly—
Queen of the Night and Empress of the sky!

AN UNFINISHED STORY.

Let me tell thee, for the story
From my memory unfolds,
Like a blossom that is bursting,
Bursting with the sweets it holds.

It is this, and nothing greater—
The fair path in which we met
Windeth still through greenest mosses,
Is by roses shaded yet.

Let me tell thee, dear one; listen!
Though the moss is 'neath the snow,
And in memory's garden only
Pink and clustering roses grow.

Days and hours are not noted
More than insects on the wing,
When beside me thou dost linger,
Making all my days as Spring.

Spring with grasses green and wavy,
Spring with flowers on her brow,
Looking with her gladsome glances
As thou lookest, dear one, now.

After Spring the Summer cometh,
And amid the leafy trees,
Songs of birds are ever filling
The soft air with melodies.

Soft as is thy coming, dear one,
When thou glidest to my side,
As a bird through ether sailing
To its nest at eventide.

We forget to greet the Summer,
We are tardy with our praise,
Till we lose her 'mid the crimson
And the gold of autumn days.

Ah, thou brilliant, beauteous Autumn,
With thy russet, rustling leaves,
With thy dusky, darting swallows,
Flitting through the shadowy eaves!

Memories of the days that are not,
  Autumns of a time apart,
Rustle down and wake the echoes
  In the quiet of my heart.

As the Autumn-tide departeth,
  Chilly Winter cometh near;
But we will not speak of Winter,—
  Darling, linger always here!

I will sing of pinkest roses,
  Mosses that are ever green,
Thou wilt be my Spring, my Blossom,
  Thou wilt be my Bird! my Queen!

NEAR A COUNTRY GRAVEYARD.

The sunlight of a fading summer day
Has glided from the fields of new-mown hay,
And o'er the rounded hill-tops far away.

And in the place where human hearts are still,
Just in the longest shadow of the hill,
A lonely bird is singing,—whip-poor-will!

It sings above the graves of centuries flown.
Amid the grass-grown hillocks one pale stone
Stands like a white-clad sentinel—alone.

It marks a soldier's grave, and names his name,
To which it adds no praise, yet naught of blame—
He died for love of country,—not for fame.

The dews fall soft where eyes have ceased to weep;
The peace is dreamless, and its shadow deep,
Old Robin Ritchie here lies wrapt in sleep

The leaves are by the evening breezes twirled,
All else is in the clasp of silence furled,
One star is looking downward on the world.

AFTER THE BATTLE.

The light has faded in the west,
The bloody day is done!
And o'er the sky's broad, azure breast
The stars steal, one by one.

The moon, clad in her silver mail,
Walks where the stars are spread,
And silently, and sad, and pale,
Keeps sentry o'er the dead.

Wild ferns grew here, and roses white,
But, ere the day had fled,
The ferns were trampled in the fight
That dyed the roses red!

TO [redacted].

I WOULD write a rhyme for thee,
But I cannot make it be
Half so fair as thou to me,
Little Nell.

I would sing of each brown tress
That the favored winds caress;
I would all my love express,
Little Nell.

I would tell of those dark eyes
Wearing looks of grave surprise,
Where some future heart-dream lies,
Little Nell.

Could I paint a fairy scene,
Thou shouldst be the tiny Queen,
Ruling with thy words serene,
Little Nell.

Could I write a perfect rhyme,
That would live through earthly time,
I would make thy name sublime,
Little Nell.

I can only say, "God bless
All her days with tenderness!
Keep Thou ever sorrowless
Little Nell!"

A FRAGMENT.

A LITTLE bark went out to sea,
The sea was calm, the air was bland,
And music swept melodiously
Back to the land.

But soon the storm rushed o'er the sea,
The wind arose, the clouds grew dark,
Yet music sighed unceasingly
From out the bark.

The bark went down beneath the sea,—
But still forever sweeps along
Unfaltering and melodiously,—
The poet's song.

TO MY SISTER, REBECCA BOYLE.

Across the sky broad golden bars were lying,
Across the fields the summer wind was sighing,
As we toward the western hills were hieing.

A yellow glow the forest was spread over,
Our path lay through the rounded blooms of clover,
Kissed by the air—the dancing, fickle rover!

The stream ran round the hill and murmured lowly,
Then sang its song between the stones more slowly,
As if the woods held something sad or holy;

And as it went through all the narrow passes,
It laughed and frolicked with the waving grasses,
As in a rustic dance the lads and lasses.

As high and low it ran in tuneful measure,
We listened in a dreamy mood of pleasure,
While our two hearts enjoyed a lapse of leisure.

The day is gone, with change of time and weather,
As floats a leaf, a flower, or a feather—
The day is gone, and yet we are together.

When Time, that maketh darkest hair grow hoary,
And crowneth each poor life with gloom or glory,
Shall part our steps, then read this simple story.

TO A FRIEND.

The West has gathered in its azure fold
A blending of rich purple, pink, and gold,
Like to a host of banners all unrolled!

Beyond the trees, and glancing brightly through,
A band of silver lies between us two,
A band of silver underlined by blue.

[White are your crests as birds whose names you bear,
White are the sails that flap the ambient air,
Beloved River of a land most fair!]

Turning awhile, the thoughtless world to view,
I turn again, with outstretched arms, to you;
Though time may change, the true will still be true!

Though I forget for one fleet moment's space
The love of one whose friendship is a grace,
The image in the temple holds its place!

Think this: that though the river grow more wide,
And higher grow the waves, and swift the tide,
In spirit I am walking at your side!

And though the shore be rough, not smooth or fair,
And harsh the wind—not gentle breaths of air—
Remember, still, that I am walking there!

POOR LITTLE LISBETH.

Ah, to-morrow is Christmas!
The light breezes blow!
The light breezes whistle
As onward they go:
Ah, to-morrow is Christmas!

And the rosy-faced urchin,
With rosy pug-nose,
Whistles light as the wind,
And thinks, as he goes,
Ah, to-morrow is Christmas!

Good Kriss Kingle is coming,
With wonderful toys,
Books, dolls, balls, and marbles,
For girls and for boys:
Ah, to-morrow is Christmas!

And the wind hurries onward
And sings high—and low—

And leaves far behind it
  The joy and the woe
Of to-morrow, the Christmas.

There is light on the pavement
  From window and door,
And gay-hearted people
  Are thronging each store;
For to-morrow is Christmas!

Just outside of the windows,
  With brown, wistful eyes,
Creeps poor little Lisbeth,
  Who murmurs and sighs,
"Ah, to-morrow is Christmas!"

And her red woolen stockings
  Are deep in the snow;
She dries with her apron
  The tears as they flow,
When she thinks upon Christmas:

Of its beautiful treasures,
  Its light and its cheer,
Its keepsakes and tokens.
  There's nothing for her,
Though to-morrow is Christmas!

Only God cares for Lisbeth,
  As from the blue dome
He sees the lone orphan
  In tears creeping home
O'er the snow spread for Christmas.

SHADOWS.

Little shadows on the wall—
Greater shadows over all—
Flickering shadows rise and fall.

On our lives are shadows cast
From the sad and solemn Past
To the Future far and vast.

Days that come, and days that go,
Full of shadows dark as woe,
Shadows high, and shadows low—

Shadows on the path before,
Shadows from the days of yore—
Ghosts of times that are no more.

SPRING.

The grass is green with freshness of the Spring,
And all among the leafy branches sing
The little birds of blue and yellow wing.

The crocus-flowers nod their heads of gold,—
The gracious morning air has made them bold,—
And to a sunbeam's kiss their leaves unfold.

If you will listen—thinking naught of wrong—
You'll hear the green and slender grasses' song
Of winter days that seem so dark and long.

It soundeth thus: The dreary days went slow,
While we were lying still beneath the snow,
Awaiting for the words: Awake and grow!

And as we lay so cold, and sad, and dumb,
Half dreaming of a summer-time to come,
When we would hear the little wild bees hum,

We felt a thrill—a voice said: Wake! Arise!
The snow is gone—afar the winter flies,
And soon will flowers open their bright eyes.

We are so glad! The sunny days are here!
And hyacinths and violets appear!
And loudly rings the wood-bird's song, and clear.

O, Spring! we love thy gentle, wooing ways,
Thy balmy breath, thy golden, beaming days;
We live in joy!—we tremble in thy gaze!

TO MRS. M. L. LOUGHBOROUGH ZANE, OF MARYLAND.

Well, here I am again, dear friend,
Your true friend still.
Afar I see the college lamps
Gleam on the hill.

And lesser lights are shining near,
And stars above
Reveal a purer light than all—
The light of love

That, falling on the resting world,
There gently lies,
Like kisses from a mother's lips
On baby eyes.

Beyond the town the river runs,
With curves and bends:
'Tis as the silken thread of thought
That onward wends—

Ah, take it! as the ocean takes
The silver tide,
A river to the mighty sea,
So deep and wide.

The river gains, as on it flows,
From streams and rills,
That bear the songs of forest lands,
And grassy hills.

And from some inland garden floats
An unblown rose,
That with the ripples or the waves
Unceasing goes.

And ferns sail out from shady dells,
And moss-grown spots;
And swiftly follow down the tide
Forget-me-nots.

Still flows the river on, and on,
Through day and night;
And gleams or darkens as it flows
In shade or light.

And on its banks are giant trees
And sombre rocks,
Marked by the ravage storms have made,
Or battle-shocks.

Thus Time, no doubt, will leave its mark,
My friend, on you;
Yet, as I think by night, the stream
Still wears its blue,—

I think of you as in the days
That seemed so fair,
When, gazing forward into life,
You saw no care.

As one might deem of meadow-lands
Afar-off seen,
How velvet-like beneath our tread
And emerald green.

Not far across life's meadow-lands
Your feet have sped,
Yet clouds have cast their shadows o'er
Your dear young head!

While walking in the meadow-lands,
But lift your eyes,
Behold above the distant hills
The great sun rise!

'Tis as the joy contentment knows,
And love reveals;
Like to the joy, and love, and peace
Your heart now feels.

The trees are green, the sky is blue,
The sunbeams there
Are as the gold that crowns with light
Your bright brown hair.

Ah, this is Spring! with bud and bloom,
With bird and bee!
It makes me think, sweet friend, of you—
Remember me!

SEPTEMBER NOTES.

Respectfully dedicated to W. W. Corcoran, Esq.

Beyond the noise and dust of town we went,
And in the greener shades we sought content,
And found it there,
Bound in an emerald frame and leafy mesh,
That keeps it from the world all bright and fresh,
Away from care.

And calm as is the landscape in repose,
And soft as sunny daytime at its close,
A lady there;
Her face is with the autumn sadness sad;
The summer once was there, and made it glad,
And left it fair.

A lingering touch of gold upon the brown,
As if the sun before its going down
Had kissed her hair,
And left the tender radiance of its rays,
The golden blessing of an evening's praise,
Forever there.

Like heart's-ease for their softness, but more blue,
And in them olden memories made new,
Her starry eyes!
With earnest look she heeded all my words,
And like delicious melodies of birds
Were her replies.

Upon a hill we stood, 'twas round and green,
And just below us, bathed in sunny sheen,
Old Harewood lay;
There many a noble tree uprears its head,
There acres of rich waving fields are spread,
And stretch away.

The beauteous flowers do their humble part,
And with their graceful posies make to Art
Sweet offerings.—
Some songs in depth count naught,—in sweetness, all;—
Some truths that from the lips of beggars fall
Prove alms to kings.—

We looked beyond the grave old forest trees,
And in our hearts stirred ancient memories,
Such gazing brings.
My friend, upraising then a fragile hand,
Said, "Noble deeds than acres of rich land
Are better things!

"And he who, in this time of greedy gain,
Gives graciously as falls the summer rain,
Without regret,
May hope to win reward for after-days,
And hear the blessed sound of heavenly praise,
When men forget!"

Then from a tree that near us cast its shade,
Gushed music that by little birds was made,
In one deep song;
And my friend thought (I read it in her face),
"How sweet to have no sorrow to retrace,
Nor feel a wrong!"

Then sang the birds, "When all our work is done,
We thank Him who divides the rain and sun
With equal share!"
I looked on that old home, dim in the wood,
Like to a heart that's staunch, and true, and good,
All silent there!

As messages that run on love's swift feet,
Across the hill came laughter, cool and sweet,
A glad refrain!
And following close came Effie through the grass,
That bended down its blades to let her pass,
Then rose again.

Her face with childish mirth was all imbued,
Her curls upon the breeze were amber-hued,
Her form was round.
We watched her as she climbed the shining hill,
And through each heart there went a pleasant thrill,
That made it bound.

She laughed, and threw in handfuls at our feet
Bright perfume-giving flowers, rich and sweet,
As offering;
White chalices, by Nature's fingers wrought,
Brimful of nectar, such as Hebe brought
Unto her king;

And pearly stars, and some of yellow too,
And cups of lilies, deep to hold the dew,
All silver-lined;
And roses with their petals blown apart
As velvet smooth, and crimson to the heart,
With green entwined.

With flowers in our hands, we went our way,
And in our hearts were thoughts as fair as they,
In garlands bright;
As we strolled on, the zephyrs passed us by,
And touched our lips, and murmured, with a sigh,
"Good-night! good-night!"

Then Twilight opened out her purple wings,
And in their shadow stilled the happy things
That gayly sung.
And soon, 'mid stars and clouds, all white and fair,
Like to a ball of silver glittering there,
The moon was hung.

And then we took the road that leads to town,
Crossed many a gentle slope, and grassy down,
And dewy glade;
But I know best the hill on which we stood,
That overlooks the home at old Harewood,
Deep in the shade.

GOOD-BYE TO 1869.

Good-bye! We will not see thee here again!
But we will meet
When thou comest sweeping in that awful train
Before the Judgment-Seat.
Good-bye!

Good-bye! Thy hands to us were gracious hands,
We'll not forget!
Toward the river shore of shadow lands
Thy ancient bark is set.
Good-bye.

Good-bye! Think not upon the deeds we rue!
But what is fair—
Remember all that's sweet and pure and true,
And offer it as prayer.
Good-bye!

Good-bye! We part from thee in tears, old friend!
—Old friends are few,

To stand beside us faithful to the end,
And greet with us the new!
Good-bye!

Good-bye! With saddened eyes we see thee go:
With hearts of pain—
Thus ends all earthly love, full well we know—
But we will meet again!
Good-bye!

THOUGHTS OF OTHER DAYS.

When the hours are long and lonely,
Full of shadows pale,
Then I wander back in fancy
Over hill and vale;
Sit again beneath the branches
Of the lofty trees;
Feel once more the silent kissing
Of the summer breeze;
Hear the laughing and the murmur
Of the woodland stream,
As it glides beneath the glimmer
Of the sun-gold beam.
And my hands are full of flowers
Varying in hue,
And I tell my fortune over,
Thinking, dear, of you.
Thus, whenever flowers fail me
In the present days,
I go back and find them blooming
In the winding ways.

Climbing over rustic fences,
Nodding by each cot,
In the days I fondly cherish,
Days that now are not.
There the wild-brier sends its perfume
On the gentle air,
As a spirit meek and holy
Offers up a prayer.
In those sunny days of summer,
Lying far behind,
Branches of the woodbine linger,
Waving in the wind,
Scattering their tender blossoms
O'er the grassy plain;
As they flutter, still I gather
Roses once again!

MY CECIL AND I.

My Cecil and I will wander
Through a gateway made of stars,
And floored with a sunset splendor
Of purple and golden bars.

And a thousand white-winged angels,
That bear in their stainless hands
Fair palms of a silver lustre,
That grow in the God-King's lands,

Will float with their song before us
Far over the azure way,
And under the arch of amber
That leads to eternal day.

There, clasping our hands together,
Through the gateway in the sky,
Ah, we will wander forever
Together, my Cecil and I.

AUTUMN LEAVES.

The leaves are falling off the trees,
Slow, one by one;
They are as saddest memories
Of what is done.

These autumn days, filled full with gold
And balmy air,
Are as the autumn days of old,
So sweetly fair.

The gathered glories of the past
Are now unrolled;
Behold their glittering treasures cast
Like autumn gold.

They steal unto us through the shade
Of purple eves,
And on our souls their touch is laid
Like faded leaves.

Retraced are all the steps we made,
Through winding walks;
And 'mid the gloom of ancient shade
Retalked our talks.

Fair memories, stay! fold down each wing
Like colored leaves!
Bright golden birds that coo or sing
Beneath the eaves

Of my great palace, towering high
Above the sod,
And almost reaching to the sky,
The home of God!

Your songs shall make my life most sweet,
And calm in peace,
As Time goes by with speeding feet,
And cares increase.

A CHRISTMAS-EVE STORY.

[In the little town of Port Mahon, in the island of Minorca, one of the Balearic Isles, they do not have a Kriss Kingle or Santa Claus, as we have, but on Christmas-eve the little children set their shoes on the window-sills and porticos, thinking that as the Princes pass with their offerings toward Bethlehem, they will drop into the waiting shoes some token of remembrance.]

'Twas the eve before the Christmas,
And a tender, solemn calm
Filled the air with its sweet presence,
Like the touch of holy balm.

'Mid the blue, and pearl, and crimson,
The broad sun had sunk from sight,
And the fair round moon came gliding
Through the darker blue of night,—

Like a silken-sailéd vessel,
When the waters are serene;
Like the lofty-treading Vashti
Who of old was crownéd queen.

And like watchful eyes of angels,
Or as flowers on the lea,
Gleamed the stars in sacred silence
O'er that land across the sea.

In a wide and deep-arched chamber,
Hung with folds of dark brocade,
Traced with golden lance and buckler
Worn in days of the Crusade,

On a couch with gorgeous drapings,
Lay a boy, with shining hair
As the gilt-edged clouds of summer
When the days are very fair;

And his earnest eyes were watching,
Through the open lattice-bars,
For the coming of the angels
Down a ladder wrought of stars.

And two tiny shoes were waiting
For some rich and precious boon,
Past the shadows of the window,
In the silver of the moon.

As the princes passed toward Bethlehem,
They would see them sitting there,
And would heap them high with tokens
Very beautiful and rare.

In that grand ancestral chamber
There was much to make life glad,—
Were it not the boy were dying,
And a woman's heart was sad.

There were sombre-tinted pictures,
And a vase of strange device,
Where a hand had carved the sorrow
That had won the vase its price.

Though his name was lost to memory,
As a rose whose leaves are shed,
On the vase was left the story
Of the artist that was dead.

O'er an antique-fashioned mirror
Was a sword of great renown,
That had slain a Moorish noble,
And had hurled a Paynim down.

And a swinging lamp of amber
Shed a radiance o'er the floor,
Laid with scene of love and romance
In the ages gone before.

And a mother, pale as marble
That portrays the sculptor's art,
Bended low, because the anguish
Struggled fiercely in her heart.

With the dawn a fair life ended
And a fairer life begun,
And the little shoes held nothing
Save the glimmer of the sun.

IN MEMORIAM.

FLORENCE TEMPLEMAN JONES.

THROUGH summer days that lay so gently round her,
She slid, from loves that vainly would have bound her,
From hearts and arms that fondly had enwound her.

We would not call her back: there is no bliss here!
Yet tears will start as we bend o'er to kiss her,
For in the coming time we'll surely miss her.

In vain the tiny bird awaits her coming,
Her pattering, restless feet, and prattled humming,
The little flakes of bread of "baby's" crumbing.

Not with the dead the little Florence numbers;
This child that lies before us only slumbers,
Nor earthly dream her baby-soul encumbers.

Her spirit-bearers, in their upward winging—
Bright angel guards—will wake her by the singing
Of golden, glorious chants, forever ringing!

"NO MATTER."

No matter how deep the snow-drifts,
No matter how harsh the wind,
There are days of Spring before us,
And days of Summer behind.

No matter if leaves of Autumn
Fall dark and dead at our feet,
Let us remember the flowers
That came at their time, full sweet!

No matter if clouds should threaten,
No matter how cold the rain,
We know that the glorious sunlight
Will shine on the world again!

AFTER THE RAIN.

After the rain, the sunshine!
After the battle, peace!
After abundant showers,
Flowers of spring increase.

After the rain of plenty
Has fallen on a land,
They who are loved of Heaven
Give with unstinted hand.

After the rain, the music
Stirs the heart of the wood;
Following deeds of goodness,
Praise from lips of the good.

After a reign of sunshine,
Grain that the reapers reap;
After a life of sorrow,
Death, in the garb of sleep.

After a weary journey
Under the chastening rod,
Rest in the Land of Angels,
Peace in the Home of God!

"GOD'S PROVIDENCE IS OUR INHERITANCE."

God's providence is thy inheritance and mine!
As tendrils round a sturdy mountain-pine
Creep slowly upward for support, and cling, and twine,
My heart trusts to His providence. Does thine?

Turn not away thy hope, nor ever doubt, nor fear—
His sweet protection reigns above us, dear!
Through all the space of time, from gliding year to year,
God's providence is our protection here!

God's providence is thy inheritance and mine!
With tenderness His radiant mercies shine,
Shine gloriously and calm upon my path and thine,
Always serene, and loving, and divine!

IN MEMORIAM.

CAPTAIN JOSEPH J. HENRY,

Oxford, New Jersey.

FROM our vision passed his image
As a dream,
Or a graceful shallop sailing
Down the stream!

Light, dispelling darkness, covers
The dream o'er,
And the shallop floateth outward
From the shore.

But a memory still will hover,
As a dove,
O'er our hearts, with sweet devotion,
Peace, and love.

Let him rest: he fought his battle,
Lived his life,
Tasted gladness, felt deep sorrow,
Mourned the strife!

Loudly rings the rolling volley
O'er his grave.
Honor to the youthful soldier,
True and brave!

Gather flowers of the spring-time,
Bright and fair;
Weave them into glowing garlands;
Lay them there,

Where the days of golden summer
Lightly pass.
As the waving plumes in battle,
Waves the grass.

Gather leaves of gorgeous autumn's
Lovely dyes;
Lay them where the dreaming soldier
Silent lies.

Rear a column high, of marble
Purely white!
His soul's symbol. Strong and Noble!
On it write.

FOR EASTER-SUNDAY.

The bells are ringing dulcet melodies,
The flowers give their sweets with one accord,
The sky is fair, with sunlight over all,
To greet our Lord.

Rejoice! Our God is risen from the dead.
His robes were glittering as a silver star!
And glorious music surged from out the gate
That stood ajar.

A million angels, clad in gleaming white,
Sang: "Glory! glory! glory to our Lord!"
Till blue and golden flowers trembled in the air
That swept the sward.

Ah! sweeter than the sweetest summer songs
That through the glades, and through the forests ring,
Came seraph songs, as wide they flung the gate
To greet their King.

The seraph lays are very sweet—but far
The shining train is gone within the gate.
We clasp our hands, we watch the breaking clouds,
The while we wait.

Below the sky, below all stars that shine,
Below all things that much or little be!—
The least of earth—yet ah, triumphant King!
Forget not me!

O little Child so humble born and clad!
Sad Man whose heart bowed low in misery!
O Thou who walked in sorrow, crowned in thorns,
Forget not me!

Risen above the world that's dark with sin,
Save rays of light that come to us from Thee—
O King upon the cross! on earth, in heaven,
Forget not me!

A SONG.

To Fielder Bowie Chew, Georgetown, D. C.

'Mid wearied clouds behold the sun decline;
The withered leaf slow flutters from the vine;
Low in the goblet lies the golden wine.

Once gleamed those clouds; the sun bejeweled them
With splendor far outvying earth's best gem—
Fair as a kingly crown their diadem.

Once shone that leaf in glittering emerald sheen,
Touched gently by sweet zephyr-lips serene;
Softly it falls, and is no longer seen.

The golden wine is ours! Gone is half.
Drive back the bitter tears! Let us but laugh.
Up with the goblet,—this is life we quaff!

So may the daylight go, the sun decline!
Let fall the withered leaf from off the vine!
Drink to the lees the golden, sparkling wine!

A GLOVE THAT WAS FASTENED.

The birds in the tree-tops were singing
As if they were singing for pay,
The leaves were so green and refreshing,
That bright sunny morning in May.

My ribbons were all in a flutter,
My spirits were all in a play,
And life seemed the color of roses,
That bright sunny morning in May.

I wished, as I gazed from the window,
And sat in that pleasant coupée,
Our lives might forever glide easy
Through all the bright mornings of May.

My kid glove, you know, would not fasten;
I recall your looks so distrait—
I held out my hand, and you buttoned
My glove, on that morning in May.

Some memories cluster as flowers,—
A graceful, luxuriant spray,—
All decking the lowlands or highlands
The sunniest mornings in May.

In silence one memory nestles,
From all other thoughts far away:
'Tis that of a glove that was fastened
One bright sunny morning in May!

"LOVE CALLS THE WAY."

Love calls the way!
But Love, you know, is blind,
And cannot see who follows close behind,
For Love is blind!

Love will not stay,
For Love is most unkind,
And fickle as the flower-scented wind.
Love is unkind!

OUR KING.

"He raiseth the dead, and cureth all manner of diseases. A man of stature somewhat tall and comely, with a very reverend countenance, such as the beholder may both love and fear. It cannot be remembered that any have seen him laugh, but many have seen him weep."—PUBLIUS LENTULUS, *President in Judea.*

His words, forever gracious,
Tell of love;
As soft-toned as the cooing of a dove,
Tender, and leal, and beautiful!

Like to the gold of morning
Shines His hair!
His face with inspiration is most fair,
Tender, and leal, and beautiful!

Not as we seem He sees us.
What we are
Shall doom our souls or crown them as a star,—
Tender, and leal, and beautiful.

His teaching is in this wise :
"Follow me !
My mercy is as great Eternity,
Tender, and leal, and beautiful.

"Thou art as crooked rivers ;
I THE SEA !
Towards the ocean must thy flowing be ;
Tender, and leal, and beautiful !

"Behold, the way is open !
I am He
That robed as God of Heaven thou shalt see,
Tender, and leal, and beautiful !"

THROUGH THE TWILIGHT.

The day of sunshine is gone by,
The gray is o'er the blue;
Amid the shadows that abound,
My thoughts go out to you.

I've kept them in my heart all day;
Like birds they nestled there,
And sang of you, in tender words,
To a delicious air.

But now the world is wrapt in mist,
And worldlings may not see,
I send my heart-birds through the space
To sing to you of me.

OUR LADY OF LORETTO.

THE loveliest month of all months in the year—
The brightest, the fairest we know—
We offer to thee, yet unstained of a tear,
Lady, our Queen of Loretto!

The roses and lilies we deem the most meet,
Of all the earth-flowers that blow,
To bind in a garland and lay at thy feet,
Lady of lofty Loretto!

Let truth in our hearts, as a lily, unfold—
The lily whose story we know—
With leaves like the pearl, overwritten with gold,
"Mary," our Queen of Loretto!

Pure Lily of lilies! Thou Queen of God's Court!
The tears of our penitence flow;
At the feet of our Father for mercy exhort,
Mary, the Lady Loretto!

From world unto world cries of pained hearts arise,
A wreathing of sorrow, of woe;
Of earth-broken hopes, 'mid a garland of sighs,
To thee, the Queen of Loretto!

O Mary, our guide over land, over sea,
Lead those who are weary to go
To the palace of stars—to our God and to thee,
Dove of our shrine at Loretto!

A PRAYER FOR FRANCE.

Dedicated to Professor Henri Masson.

God, drive back the foemen who gather—
  Ah! check their advance!
Their hands have polluted the altars
  Of beautiful France!

Thou, God, art the Captain of Nations;
  Thy smile or Thy frown
May raise up an army, or hurl it—
  For evermore—down!

Confuse Thou the foemen who gather—
  Ah! check their advance!
And, God, bless the Legions of Honor,—
  The children of France!

NELLIE.

Brown is her hair like an oak-leaf,
Red are her lips,
Like a rose where honey hideth
The wild bee sips!

Ah! brown did I say her hair is?
Gold is the ray,
Touching the brown with its sunshine
Bright as the day!

And thus many times I know not
Whether most brown
Or gold are the tresses waving
So gracefully down.

And she, the beauty, the fairy,
Glideth along,
As light as a young love floateth
Out into song!

A RAINBOW.

The day its last sorrow was venting
In drops from the blue;
I gazed on the cloud-rifts, expecting
The sun to shine through.

Through rain and through mist to a shelter
A form swiftly came—
Yet any one "caught by a shower"
Would do just the same!

The shelter he sought is a porch-way,
Low, shabby, and small;
But since that young hero it shielded,
It seems to me tall;

And when by fair moon-silver lighted,
A temple of art—
It ever shall hold in my memory
A notable part.

But I have strayed far from my subject:
A moustache of brown,
And eyes that looked frequently upward
When not looking down.

He took from his pocket a meerschaum,
And filled it with stuff
The same as his moustache in color,
And something like snuff.

He smoked till a blue sort of vapor
Around him was curled,
And he looked like a spirit just landed
From some other world.

My meaning is but as I write it:
A spirited joke—
Let it end as the romance I tell you,
In nothing but smoke.

The clouds broke asunder, revealing
A rich, tinted bow,
Sent as a most beautiful promise
To mortals below.

The violet, hued as its namesake
That springs from the ground,
Shone bright through the pearl-drifts that floated
So lightly around.

Like an archway of garlands, the rainbow
I saw through the rain;
Then I lowered my gaze, and my thinking
To mankind again.

As I came back to earth from the heavens,
The porch-hero went
Round the corner, as if he regretted
The time that was spent.

A SIMPLE RHYME.

WHERE the orchard grass is waving
  In a gush of golden light,
Low reclines a rustic maiden;
  Yellow is her hair, and bright.

Like a wild-wood bird she singeth
  Underneath the orchard trees;
From her heart a voice is trilling
  Most delicious melodies.

We remember songs of spring-time,
  Sung to us in days of yore,
Sweeter than all other music,
  We hear now, or heard before,

Sweeter than all other ballads
  Sounds each simple little rhyme,
Floating through the doors of memory
  Down into the present time.

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